



# The Canal Zone Philatelist



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## Vice-President's Report

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I am increasingly concerned in the loss of members—perhaps some by attrition, but others who allow their memberships to lapse. This, despite an outstanding effort on the part of our President to advertise and gain new members using eBay. Perhaps we are not addressing all their needs and interests.

The membership is comprised of a variety of collectors who fall primarily into two main categories: those who have lived in the Canal Zone (civilians or military), and those who may have toured there, or who have a general interest. Each group may focus on different facets of Canal Zone collecting. Unlike many countries, Canal Zone collecting offers a finite number of issues (1904-1978). The Canal Zone is historically interesting with the early stamps of Colombian origin, overprinted with Panama, and overprinted again with Canal Zone. The aspects are endless, and can appeal to all types of stamp collectors: commemoratives, postal stationery, postal cards, post

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## New Essays for the Panama Pacific International Exposition Relating to the Panama Canal

by Gary B. Weiss



Fig. 1 U.S. #397-E var. Panama Pacific, designer's model  
Inscribed: "Opening of Panama Canal 1913"

Canal Zone collectors are generally familiar with the relationships between the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) and the Opening of the Panama Canal. A set of four face different stamps was issued in 1913, by the U.S., for the Exposition (more when one includes perforation and shade varieties, Scott Nos. 397-404). The 2¢ value shows the Pedro Miguel Locks

in the Panama Canal and is labeled "Panama Canal". The original design contained an error and called the image "Gatun Locks". This essay, Scott No. 398-E3 and E3a, was discussed in detail by Spielberg in the CZP 32:30, 1996. The other values show Balboa, Golden Gate, and the Discovery of San Francisco Bay. The connection of these three stamps to the Panama

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## CZSG Mail Sale Update

The CZSG Mail Sale has been postponed one month and will **close on Sunday, October 29**. Members of the CZSG will receive by mail a hard copy of the catalog with black-&-white illustrations about September 18. Beginning September 15th, the 2006 CZSG catalog with color illustrations will be posted on the CZSG Web Site:

[www.canalzonestudygroup.com](http://www.canalzonestudygroup.com)

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Display advertising accepted from CZSG members only at the following rates per insertion:

One column, two inches	\$10.00
One column, five inches	20.00
Two columns, five inches	35.00

No larger advertisements are accepted. Remittance must accompany copy. Deadline for ads, first day of Mar., June, Sept., Dec. Copy should be sent to the Editor.

Back issues of the journal, handbooks, and other publications can be ordered from Richard F. Murphy, 501 Rosebud Lane, Greer, SC 29650.

Articles and information for publication should be sent to the Editor. Glossy photographs are desirable for figures of stamps or covers; however, enlarged high quality photocopies are sometimes acceptable. Illustrations must show clearly against black backgrounds. If you need help, write, phone, or FAX the Editor. The author must advise the Editor if the article has been published or is being considered for publication elsewhere.

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**National Postal Museum  
CZSG Visit  
by David Zemer**

During the Washington 2006 Exhibition members from the Canal Zone Study Group were invited to attend a presentation at the National Postal Museum. About a dozen came and were escorted through the security area down to the basement where members of the Museum gave a presentation which covered the Arago project and the Canal Zone post office archives. Tim Scofield of the NPM pointed out that they had over 30,000 catalogued items from these archives waiting for volunteers to come and work on. To give the audience a taste

**Secretary's Report**  
John C. Smith  
408 Redwood Ln.  
Schaumburg, IL 60193

As of August 05, 2006, our total membership stands at 698. Unfortunately, 34 have been dropped from the rolls for non-payment of dues.

Your Board of Directors wishes to recognize and thank our 107 Sustaining and 152 Contributing members who have contributed extra to help make the CZSG what it is. We wish to also thank all our regular members for their continued support.

of what they have the NPM showed the audience some of the preliminary artwork for the Thatcher Ferry Bridge stamp, Scott No. 157.

Tim paid respect to two of our members, George Brett (1912 - 2005) and Joe Foley (1923 - 2006), who were honored by the NPM for their work at the Museum and who's memories are kept alive on the Museum's website.

If any of our members are interested in volunteering to work on the Canal Zone archives please contact me for information or go directly to their website [www.postalmuseum.si.edu/arago/](http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/arago/) and visit the "Arago™ Research Participant Program" for additional information.



## Auctions by Jim Crumpacker

Here is the Auctions column presenting a few lots sold during the period April 1 through June 30, 2006. A much longer and separate report is elsewhere in this issue for the second half of the "Eagle" collection as offered by the Matthew Bennett firm. Otherwise, seasonal slowness had a serious effect on Canal Zone philately.

Given below are a few results of interest. The ultimate selling price of hammer plus commission is shown first followed by the current catalog value, in parenthesis, from the 2006 *Scott's Specialized*. I do not normally include information about certificates of authenticity with a lot description but did mention the 'PSE superb 98' rating on a Scott 157a. Does anyone really care about having these grading numbers included?

15 var., PANAMA's 15mm long, TG, H, barely F w/ margin \$1668 (\$2750) Regency-Superior.

58, OG, HR, XF \$195 (\$275) HR Harmer

57a, silver (bridge) omitted, OG, NH, XF w/ left and bot. margins, PSE superb 98, \$9200 (\$7500) HR Harmer

Zeppelin cover, VF Crist. 5/15/30 w/ C3x4 & C5 strip of 5, all F or better, missed Zeppelin connection in Havana, sent by regular mail to Seville, then via Zeppelin to Germany w/ all proper marks, Sieger 64IIIb \$1760 (\$n/a) R.A. Siegal

The names and addresses of the auction houses which offered these lots are shown below.

**H.R. Harmer, Inc.**  
3 East 28th Street, 7th Floor  
New York, NY 10016

**Regency Superior**  
PO Box 8277  
St Louis, MO 63156-8277

**Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc.**  
60 East 56th Street, 4th Floor  
New York, NY 10022

**Articles Wanted...**  
**Contact Editor**

## Special Auction Report by Jim Crumpacker

In early May the Matthew Bennett firm via its Harbour Auctions subsidiary offered the second half of the "Eagle" collection at public auction. The 220 lots available contained much fresh material but buyer fatigue set in to some extent as four or more lots with the same Scott number were sometimes put up for sale.

Nonetheless, prices held up reasonably well. Collectors are still willing to pay a premium for quality. Available below are 25 or so of the more interesting results, with the 'hammer plus commission' price shown first and the current Scott's value in parenthesis thereafter.

2b, CANAL ZONE double, OG, HR, F \$1,840 (\$2,250)

4-8, all F or better (8c w/ se) on F folded cover Ancon 12/11/04 to Panama \$299 (\$n/a)

7, OG, NH, almost VF \$196 (\$175)

10a, inverted overprint, OG, H, XF \$184 (\$225)

10 var., ON of ZONE dropped, OG, H, F in margin bl. 4 w/ 3 normals \$345 (\$414)

13b, ZONE antique, OG, NH, VF \$184 (\$175)

14b, CANAL ZONE inverted, OG, H, VF \$299 (\$425)

18 var., no bar, CZSG 18.8, dry OG, H, F w/ nat. se \$138 (\$n/a)

22a, horiz. pair imperf. between, OG, H, VF \$1,093 (\$1,300)

24c, double overprint, OG, H, F-VF \$604 (\$450)

33a, double overprint, OG, NH, VF w/ rt. & bot. margins, \$489 (\$375)

46, 1st. prt., OG, NH, F+ to VF \$230 (\$160)

48, OG, H, XF \$460 (\$500)

56d, horiz. pair, left stamp w/o overprint, OG, H, F-VF w/ left margin \$1,093 \$1,250

56f, ZONE double, OG, NH, VF in margin pair w/ normal, CANAL on left margin \$2,185 (\$1,259)

61d, CANAL double, dist. OG w/ minor gum loss, H, F-VF in pair w/ normal \$1,610 (\$1,903)

71d, ZONE CANAL, OG, H, XF \$431 (\$500)

84b, ZONE CANAL, OG, NH, VF \$299 (\$500)

85a, ZONE ZONE, OG, H, F-VF \$431 (\$600)

91 var., CANAL shifted left, CZSG

91.1a, OG, H, barely F in str. of 3 w/ 2 normals, nat. se as always \$334 (\$n/a)

97b, booklet pane of 6, OG, NH, VG to VF \$431 (\$525)

J3, sl. dist. OG, H, barely F \$805 (\$1,000)

J11Cd, OG, H, F-VF \$242 (\$200)

O8, OG, H, F-VF \$403 (\$650)

U2c, frame only, typed address but not mailed, sl. toning o/w VF \$920 (\$1,000)

UX6, mint entire, XF \$805 (\$1,050)



CZSG members at meeting at StampShow 2006: front row from left - Glenn Staron, Russ Samuels, Charles Heberer; back row - Parker Bailey, Gary Weiss, Elliot Coleman, Dick Larkin, Dick Bates, David Zemer.

## CZSG at Washington 2006

Once every 10 years there is an International Philatelic Exhibition in the U.S. This decade the show took place in Washington, D.C. from May 27th to June 3rd. Held at the Washington Convention Center, this exhibition received accolades from most of those who visited it. That is true of CZSG members who attended as well.

The CZSG participated in the show in many ways: an informational exhibit was on display to promote the Study Group and Canal Zone philately; a table, shared with COPAPHIL, in the societies section of the hall, was staffed throughout the show so that members and potential members could visit; three quality exhibits with Canal Zone material were in the competition for awards; a meeting of CZSG members was held; and a visit to the National Postal Museum was arranged. Nearly 60 members signed in when they stopped by the CZSG table to say hello, meet friends and fellow collectors, and learn about

activities and publications, sit down and rest, or even ask directions. John Smith has reported a good yield of new members from those who picked up materials and membership forms and information about handbooks which were on display.

Both CZSG sponsored meetings were well attended. One, the session at the National Postal Museum, is described elsewhere. The other was a meeting of the CZSG on the first Saturday of the exhibition. Over 35 members and visitors were drawn away from the exhibit floor for this meeting of the CZSG membership. David Zemer presided at the meeting which included a general business section, a brief show and tell, and a lively discussion of projects underway or being considered. Issues discussed included the need for a new Editor of the *CZP*, and possible expansion of the criteria for awarding the Exhibitor's Medal sponsored by the Canal Zone Study Group. Particular attention was paid to using the web to increase the availability of CZSG

publications and materials, such as the annual Mail Sale and the *CZP*, so that collectors can access them via the internet. The possibility of making the CZSG publications available on CD or via other forms of electronic access was discussed. A part of that discussion involved consideration of making available back issues of the *CZP*, either in a form that can be downloaded and printed or such that it can be actively searched electronically. Computerizing over 50 years of the *CZP* and *Canal Zone Stamps* by scanning and using optical character recognition are possible, but would be labor intensive. A major advantage for future publications is that images in color are inexpensive and readable on the computer, but raise the cost of publication significantly for print versions. Another project discussed is possibly scanning the photocopies of the specimen sheets to make them more widely available. Further investigation will determine the feasibility of carrying out these projects.

R.D. Bates, Jr.

## APS StampShow 2006 Meeting

This year's four day APS show was held in Rosemont, IL just outside Chicago. On Saturday Aug 26th, ten CZSG members and two visitors met in a lively meeting.

Gary Weiss ran the meeting and spoke on the topic of "how not to sell a specialized Canal Zone collection." Too often, he pointed out, a collection is sold through a major auction house. There is a risk in using a major auction house. In that venue the major items do very well, but many items of considerable interest to other collectors but with a value less than the threshold for individual lots at the auction house, are relegated to remainder lots often labeled as balance of collection, with little by way of description to make clear what the lot contains. These large lots may be a treasure for the collector or dealer, who identify the value in the lot, but the owner, or the owner's estate, is the likely loser. The alternative is to ask that lots of considerable interest to specialized collectors not be sold as a remainder in an auction, but be returned to the owner to be disposed

of separately, such as sold on ebay, to a specialized dealer, or through the CZSG in its Mail Sale which thrives on specialized, but not necessarily high priced material.

David Zemer, CZSG President, described the ongoing discussion of the annual dues for members, which have been at \$8 per year for decades. Dick Bates, past CZSG President, said that the question of possibly raising the annual dues has been discussed for years, but the conclusion in the past has been not to raise them because the organization has enough money to fund the projects it has contemplated. At present member dues do not pay the full cost of the *CZP* including distribution, the cost of which is underwritten by additional contributions by sustaining and contributing members. Member John Morrison pointed out that this is a common concern for non-profits, but that it is generally better for dues to rise gradually, in part to emphasize the value of the projects being undertaken. Contributions by members above the annual member's dues can be used to fund special projects, supplemented by return on the

'endowment' of 4 to 6% a year. It was pointed out the major projects, such as the publication of *Canal Zone Stamps*, was accomplished by setting aside funds over a period of many years.

Gary Weiss spoke about problems encountered in getting expertization, certificates for items involving overprint shifts that leave part of the overprint on the perforations. Dick Bates agreed to collaborate with Gary on an article for the *CZP* to describe the issues on either side of this problem.

Elliot Coleman showed examples of unissued registration envelopes described as essays; Gary Weiss and David Zemer discussed the material in the archives, which may produce amazing finds, but which are not easily organized, in response to a question about the updated Postal Stationery Catalogue recently published.

Dick Larkin spoke briefly about his exhibit. He offered to take members on a tour after the end of the CZSG meeting. The meeting adjourned to see the exhibit.

R.D. Bates, Jr.

## The Panama Line

By David J. Leeds and Alan P. Bentz

The following article is the first of a series, tracing the history of the ships of the **Panama Line**, its antecedents and their postal markings. Emphasis is on the philatelic aspects, including stampless covers, paquebot covers, post cards, seapost obliterations and killers, and commemorative cachets.

Construction of the Panama Railroad was promoted by three New York capitalists - William H. Aspinwall, John L. Stevens, and Henry Chauncy. In 1852 the town on the Atlantic side was called Aspinwall. It would still be called that, but for the objection of the Colombian government that insisted it be called Colon. The U.S. refused to recognize it as Colon

February 20, and arrived February 28, from the notation at left. One might speculate that Mary Aspinwall is a relative of William. Another item of interest is that it was sent to a lieutenant aboard the USS *Kansas*, with the notation "Nicaragua Survey." It seems that this vessel may have been involved in the survey to study the feasibility of a Nicaraguan Canal. The



Fig. 1 Letter from New York to Colon-Aspinwall (1867)



Fig. 2 Letter from Cartagena to New York (1869)

### Introduction

The Isthmus of Panama was an important link to the gold fields of California – even before there was a canal. On April 15, 1850 a contract was signed in Bogota between New Granada and the **Panama Railroad Company (PRR)**, granting PRR exclusive rights to build and operate a railroad across the Isthmus and to transport all mails, for which PRR would pay New Granada 5% of all mail contract money received [1]. (On September 20, 1861 New Granada became the United States of Colombia). The Panama Railroad became operational in 1855. Mail was sent to the United States by forwarding agents, consisting of folded letters (stampless covers).

until Colombia stopped delivering mail addressed to Aspinwall [2].

The letter in Fig. 1 was sent c/o Tracey Robinson, Agent for the Panama Railroad Co, leaving New York on November 1, 1867 and arriving in Colon-Aspinwall on December 28, 1867. (Note cork obliterator in addition to postmark).

Figure 2 was sent via the forwarding agent M. de Alcazar in Colon, New Granada (then part of Colombia). It was sent from Cartagena on December 31, 1869, arriving in New York aboard "Steamship 10" on January 26, 1870.

The next illustration (Fig. 3) is a letter from Oxford MA via New York to Aspinwall. It appears to have been mailed February 8, 1873, left NY on

U.S. Congress did not make a final decision on the Isthmian route until 20 years later.

Figure 4 is another example showing a letter sent through the forwarding Agent Jose A. Cespedes in Colon. It was sent from Ocaña, Colombia on March 10, 1874, arriving in New York on June 7, 1874 with 10c due.

### Panama Railroad Company

A shipping service had to be provided by the Panama Railroad Company to support construction and operation of the railroad across the Isthmus of Panama. Founded in New York on April 7, 1849, the PRR operated its own sailing ships beginning in 1855. The railroad was completed, with the

(continued next page)



Fig. 3 Letter from Massachusetts to Aspinwall (1873)

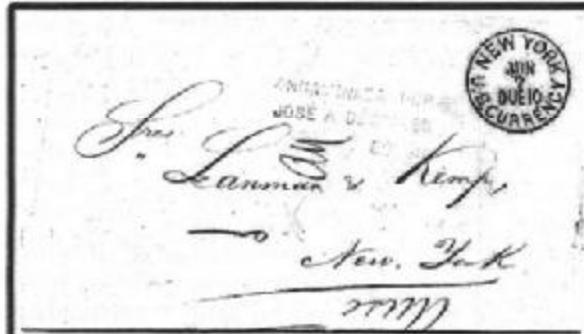


Fig. 4 Letter from Colombia to New York (1874)

first transcontinental, trans-isthmic, ocean-to-ocean crossing January 28, 1855. The event is commemorated with a stamp (Fig. 5), Canal Zone #147, issued on the centenary of the first trip.



Fig. 5 PRR Centenary (CZ 147)

In 1859, a joint venture was formed with the **North Atlantic Steamship Company** and the **Pacific Mail Steamship Company** (PMSC). Three ships of 3000 gross registered tons, were acquired from the Collins line: *Adriatic*, *Atlantic*, and *Baltic*. However, they were withdrawn in 1863 as being too large. (See below). In 1865 service to both terminals, Aspinwall (later Colon) and Panama City was provided by PMSC. Their operations continued even during the French Canal building attempt (1881-1904).

These early ships transported mail. However, no sea post offices were established and ship (purser's) markings are not known to the authors. It is probable that covers exist with senders' or forwarders' manuscript markings indicating an imminent ship sailing, e.g. "Via SS *Finance*", "Via SS *Atlantic*", etc. An example is shown in Fig. 6 below of a letter sent on the *Advance* - a later vessel.



Fig. 6 Letter carried on the Advance (1906)

*Adriatic* was one of the earliest vessels. It was a side-wheel steamer, shown below in Fig. 7. Its image also appeared in both a U.S. (Fig 8) and a Peruvian revenue stamp. As mentioned above, it was too large for this service. Looking at the picture, it is hard to believe that it was the equivalent of the *Titanic* of nearly 60 years later - or the new Cunard Liner *Queen Mary 2*.



Fig. 8 U.S. Stamp of 1869 (U.S. 117)

Edward Knight Collins was determined to wrest the monopoly of carrying transatlantic mail, and the prestige of 'The Great Atlantic Race' from Samuel Cunard. He built the largest steamer to date as the *Arctic*, which dwarfed all other vessels in size and opulence. Unfortunately, the *Arctic* sank after a collision in 1854. Collins built a new liner, the biggest yet, as the *Adriatic* which was launched in 1856. She was 354 feet in length, 3,670 tons gross register with two engines capable of developing 2,800 horsepower [3].

Collins was hit by another disaster when the *Pacific* sank in reported ice fields - presumably much as the *Titanic* did years later. This put the Collins Line into a fatal financial spiral, and the ships *Ariatic*, *Baltic*, and *Atlantic* were auctioned off for a mere \$50,000.

On February 1, 1893 PRR formed its own company, the **Colombian Line**, using chartered ships. On January 1, 1896 it was renamed the **Panama Railroad Steamship Line** (PRRSSL). Control passed to the United States Government May 4, 1904 as the U.S. assumed responsibility for construction of the canal. Control of the PRRSSL then was through a Board of Directors appointed by the Secretary of War. The War Department was the authority for U.S. interests beginning at this time when their own (PRRSSL) ships were obtained.

In 1948 Congress established the **Panama Railroad Company** as a government corporation. In 1950 it was renamed the **Panama Canal Company**, and given the new responsibility of maintaining and operating the Panama Canal and of setting canal-transit toll rates under a prescribed formula. The intent was to have it become a self-supporting corporate entity independent of annual Congressional budget appropriations.

In 1979, the Canal Zone operation was turned over to an interim by-national Canal Commission with the intent of a gradual evolution into a 100% Panamanian operation by the end of the year 1999.

(To be continued)

## Bibliography

- [1] Isthmian Collectors Club Journal, June 2003, p 03-41
- [2] Tatelman, Edward I.P., *Canal Zone Postage Stamps*, Canal Zone Postal Service (1961), pp 15-16.
- [3] Shaw, David W. *The Sea Shall Embrace Them - The Tragic Story of the Steamship Arctic*, (2002). The Free Press (Div. of Simon and Schuster, Inc.).

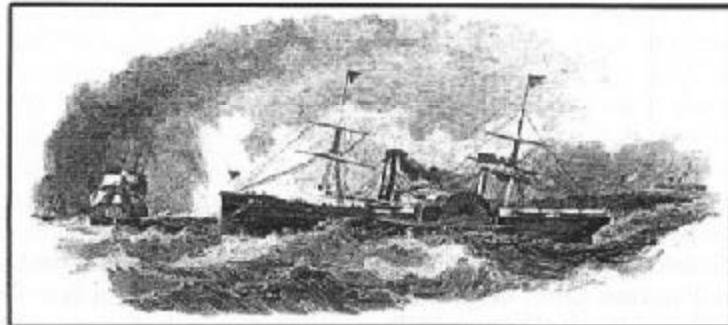


Fig. 7 SS Adriatic

## Pan Pacific Expo Essays

Continued from page 21

Canal is limited to the relationship of the PPIE and the Canal.

The Shreves Philatelic Galleries June 16, 2006 sale of The W. Curtis Livingston Collection of United States 20th Century Essays and Proofs provides a stronger link of the 1¢ stamp to the Canal Zone. The Scott catalog lists only one essay for this stamp and the unique example of this essay, Scott No. 397-E1, was included in the sale and sold for \$1,100 plus 15% premium or \$1,265 (catalog value \$1,500). The auction description noted that this "designer's model" consists of two photos, one for the outer frame and one for the vignette, overlaid to make a composite design with wash drawing of palm trees in background and drawn in "1 Cent 1" in white wash. It was mounted on thick grey card measuring 89x77mm, inscribed and signed "Approved July 16, 1912/Frank H. Hitchcock/Postmaster General". The design is very similar to the issued stamp with the top inscription reading "San Francisco 1915".

The next lot (Fig 1) was an unlisted essay (although it has a 1990 Philatelic Foundation certificate) and realized \$1,250/1,437.50. This designer's model is very similar to the previous model, made in the same way with two photos to make a composite design except the inscription under "U.S. Postage" reads "Opening of Panama Canal 1913". There is slightly differ-

ent touch-up to the palm trees and a similarly drawn in "1 Cent 1" in white wash. It is mounted on a thick grey card measuring 106x86mm, neatly inscribed in calligraphy "Bureau of Engraving and Printing/Approved" with handstamp signature of the Director, J.E. Ralph. The reason for the design change may have been that it was speculated that the Panama Canal might not yet be open in 1913 when the stamps were to be issued. If this inscription, rather than San Francisco had been used, the entire set would be directly related to Canal Zone philately.

Once this variation in the inscription was noted, it was looked for on the other essays of the set. The Scott catalog lists and illustrates four essays for the 2¢, one for the 5¢, and five for the 10¢. Only one of these, Scott

No. 398-E1, has this legend. It is illustrated and is slightly wider than the issued stamps. It is described as an ink and wash drawing of the frame with photo of design used for the 5¢. It is mounted on card stamped "STAMP DIVISION FEB. 12, 1912 P.O. DEPT." A very similar photo essay (Fig. 2) sold in the Regency-Superior stamp auction of June 17, 2006 for \$850/977.50. It is mounted on card, backstamped STAMP DIVISION/FEB 21 1912/P. O. DEPT. This is 9 days later than 398-E1 (although it is possible that one of the dates, 12 and 21, was mistranscribed).

I would have preferred the issued stamps to have said "Opening of Panama Canal" rather than "San Francisco". I wonder if any essays for the 5¢ and 10¢ values existed with the "Panama Canal" inscription.



Fig. 2 U.S. #398-E1 var. Panama Pacific, designer's model inscribed: "Opening of Panama Canal 1913"

## Vice-President's Report

Continued from page 21

cards, rate changes, overprints, perfs, officials, postage dues, EFOs, booklet panes, plate blocks and cinderellas. Cover collectors can find an amazing variety of sub-categories, such as: First Days, postal history, town cancels, aerophilately, ship cancels, registered mail, cachets, APOs, and censored mail from WWI and WWII. It is therefore incumbent on us to appeal to the interest of *all* through our publications and meetings.

**Panama Line Series.** Some years ago, I continued working on an article about the Panama Line, originally started by David Leeds (Former CZP Editor). One of the stumbling blocks

to publication was deciding the proper venue for it. The opus didn't quite fit the category of a Handbook, although it could be presentable on a CD. Recently, the inspiration came to publish the article in serial form in the CZP. It shall begin with this issue. The intent is to give a history of the ships of The Panama Line, including its predecessors. The story goes back to the 1840s (with stampless covers), with a history of the Panama Railroad Company, the roster of ships of the line, seapost markings, the New Panama Line ships, WWI and WWII contributions. Also included are a few first hand accounts—including one of the sinking of the SS *Finance*.

**Northeast Chapter.** The regular meeting of the Northeast Chapter of the CZSG is held at the annual spring PHILATELIC SHOW in Boxborough MA (sponsored by the Northeast Federation of Stamp Clubs). A group also meets in the fall at THAMESPEX in Waterford CT. This year's meeting will be on Sunday, October 15. Contact me at the E-mail address above for directions and/or Prospectus.

**Web Site.** If you search under [www.czsg.org](http://www.czsg.org), you will get the newly, designed, modern web site [www.canalzonestudygroup.com](http://www.canalzonestudygroup.com), which has a link to the old web site at [www.stampshows.com](http://www.stampshows.com). The old site will only continue through September 2006, and will then be terminated.

## Fake Overprints on Canal Zone Stamps

By Richard D. Bates, Jr.

Overprinted U.S. Issues -1924-1933

Part VII - Sharp A Overprints

Fake ZONE ZONE and

ZONE CANAL Overprints

This article dealing with fakes of the sharp A overprints has been inspired by several examples shown to me at Washington 2006 and are provided courtesy of Dirk Kitchin. Many fakes in the sharp A series are of errors that do not exist, which in itself should make a potential purchaser suspicious. The examples shown here are different, as they look on first glance like known errors.

The first example involves Scott No. 91c, one of the most common and easily obtainable errors on Canal Zone stamps. It arises from a shift of the CANAL ZONE overprint upward or downward to create examples where the overprint on the stamp reads ZONE CANAL. Stamps on the top row of top panes on which the overprint is shifted downward may have the variety CANAL only, Scott No. 91b; the bottom row of stamps on bottom panes with the overprint shifted upward may read ZONE only, Scott No. 91a.

8.8 mm, versus slightly over 9 mm in the genuine case. To the best of my knowledge, used examples of 91c are not known, with the exception of one on cover. The cancellation on the stamp at left does not match known CANAL ZONE markings, another sign of a possible fake.

Examples of this error arise on an entire pane at a time - in fact, for 91c there were at least three panes that received the shifted overprint, resulting in 270 examples (90 x 3) of the ZONE CANAL variety. For such errors, the individual copies will be from different positions on the pane on which the shift occurred, and in the case of 91c, top and bottom panes. As a result, the same types of variations in spacing between ZONE and CANAL (and CANAL and ZONE) that would be experienced on normal examples of 91 from the same printing can be found. Thus spacings, specific characteristics of individual letters, and other characteristics that vary from position to position are less valuable for spotting fakes of this type of error.

That is in contrast to the ZONE ZONE errors, all of which arise on one position (LR18) on the 400 subject sheet of the first printing of the sharp A overprint applied to panes printed on the flat plate press. The ZONE

ZONE examples at the left and right of Fig. 2 are fakes, flanking a genuine example of Scott No. 85a in the center. Used copies of 85a do exist. The genuine ZONE ZONE variety on the 15 cent value, No. 90a, is extremely scarce, with only three known examples, all in large blocks. All genuine copies of ZONE ZONE errors will have the characteristics of this particular position (LR18), including the exact same spacings between the two ZONES. The example at the far right is on a rotary press stamp identifiable by the gauge of the perforations being 11 x 10 1/2. The ZONE ZONE variety occurs only with overprinted flat press stamps; thus this example cannot be genuine because it is on the wrong U.S. stamp. Note that the two ZONE overprints are badly out of alignment, not consistent with the known ZONE ZONE varieties. In the case of the 15 cent stamp, the overprint is correctly applied to a flat press stamp, but the overprint lacks correct details: the letters are thin and not well formed, and the spacing between the two ZONES is 9.5 mm. On the genuine example it is 9.0 mm. The appearance of the serifs on the fake overprint, where they are vertical, should be compared with that on the genuine example, where they are at a slight angle.

With a knowledge of how the genuine error arose, fakes are easier to spot. The fake items illustrated here are close in appearance to the genuine items, but each has at least one characteristic that marks it as no good.



Fig. 1 CZ 91c, "good" copy at left,  
copy with "Fake" OP at right

Figure 1 shows a good copy of 91c at the left, and the fake that appeared at Washington 2006 at the right. The color of the overprint is the wrong shade of red, too dark, and the letters are thin and irregular, compared to the genuine example at the left. It is closer in appearance to the overprint on the second printing of No. 91, which is not known with a ZONE CANAL overprint. The ZONE in the fake is slightly too short, measuring



Fig. 2 CZ 85a, "good" copy in center, copies with  
"Fake" ZONE ZONE OP left and right

## 5th Infantry Regiment on the Zone in WWII by Wayne Worthington

As part of the strengthening of the ground defense of the Canal Zone anticipating WWII hostilities, the 5th Infantry Regiment was ordered on Sept 3, 1939 to depart Ft Williams Maine and deploy to Panama. The 5th joined the 13th Infantry Regiment as part of the 18th Infantry Brigade deployment to reinforce the Panama Canal Department.

But this was not the first time the 5th would serve in Panama. In 1914, the 5th was part of the three-regiment WWI defense force and was quartered at Paraiso. In 1939 the entire force returned to Paraiso and although they performed guard duty throughout the Zone, their headquarters would remain located in this small camp town named Paradise.

The earliest 5th Infantry Regiment cover I have is shown in Fig. 1. It shows elements of the force already settled into its Paraiso Camp. In fact, of the few dozen covers I have from the 5th, all are cancelled from their base camp with one exception.

The cover in Fig. 2 is cancelled at Paraiso, but is penciled on the back Camp Pacora. Pacora was a small Army airstrip outside of Tocumen Airport in Panama and the 5th had a small guard unit there from time to time.

This pencil notation was the usual way Army and Army Air Corps mail was handled for subordinate units in and around the Canal Zone. Many small teams were sent out on special short-term missions, but the mail at those sites was bundled with other correspondence and carried back

to their headquarters so it could be censored. This saved assigning and training censor personnel just for temporary duty (TDY) units and kept the majority of troops focused on their primary mission. For this reason, however, tracing WWII soldiers' mail in the Canal Zone can be difficult and gives the impression that units were always in fixed locations.

The WWII mission of the 5th was in truth not as exciting as that of the 158th, 33rd or 150th Regiments. The 158th, subject of an earlier article, worked at developing jungle warfare doctrine and providing small Spanish-speaking teams for intelligence and counter-sabotage missions. The 150th, subject of a future article, provided units for special guard duty in Central and South American airfields, construction sites, radar/communication sites and training missions, often with units from other US services or foreign armies. And the 33rd, subject of another future study, was relieved from WWII duty in the Zone to perform Bases-for-Ships defense at British sites in the Caribbean under the Lend-Lease Program.

The 5th, on the other hand, performed primarily vital installation guard duty. They were assigned on the Pacific side around Miraflores and Pedro Miguel Locks. They conducted fixed-position defense, mobile guard duty, patrolling, attack training to repel an enemy force and transit guard rotation.

The latter mission took a good number of personnel. A ship of American, British, French or Dutch registry took an on-board guard contingent of about ten men. These registries averaged 10-11 ships transiting the Canal per

day and only in daylight hours. Six or seven ships per day transited the Canal under other national registries, and these vessels were assigned 15-25 guards. As can be seen this duty seven days a week required a major manpower commitment from the 5th and 14th Regiments.

On July 14, 1940, the 5th relieved the 33rd of all guard duty so it could prepare to deploy to Caribbean bases allowing the British to bring units home for fighting in Europe.

As the construction of the Boyd-Roosevelt Trans-Isthmian Highway got underway, military trucks could move further and further along rough improved roadways along the Canal between Balboa and Cristobal. Therefore in July 1940, the 5th also relieved the 14th of guard assignments for the Gatun Locks and Gatun Spillway since they could now reach these points from Camp Paraiso by military truck.

Upgrades in equipment flowed slowly to units in the Zone as priority went to forces preparing to go into active combat elsewhere. The 5th, however, was finally completely motorized on Nov 13, 1941. The Regiment's strength was fixed at 1833 and it would be prepared to cross the Canal by highway which formally opened on April 15, 1943.

Figure 3 shows my latest cover of the 5th Infantry Regiment in the Panama Canal Zone. This December 1942 cover was mailed as the Regiment was preparing for a new mission. On January 19, 1943, the 5th Infantry Regiment left the Panama Canal Zone for the United States. It underwent combat training and

(continued on next page)

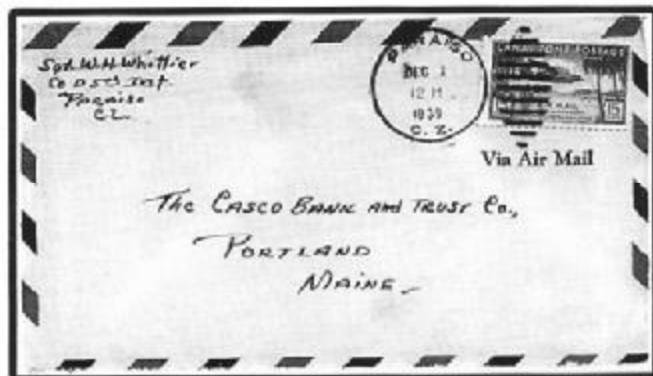


Fig. 1 5th Infantry Regiment Dec 1939,  
Paraiso Camp CZ



Fig. 2 Medical Det. 5th Infantry,  
APO 833, Pacora Camp CZ

re-equipping and was assigned to a Division going into the European Theater.

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Fig. 3 HQ 5th Infantry, APO 833. Dec 1942, Paraiso Camp CZ

### German Detention Camp on Taboga Island

By: Irwin Gibbs

Guantanamo, Cuba was not the first U.S. Prison camp on U.S. occupied territory. The U.S. broke off relations with Germany in February 1917 and declared war on April 6, 1917.

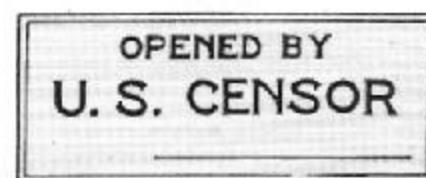
The *Panama Canal Record* of April 18, 1917 advises that the Hotel Aspinwall on Taboga Island was closed on April 11 and on April 12 the hotel and grounds were placed in service as a concentration camp for German civilians interned on the Isthmus administered by U.S. military personnel even though the island was part of the Republic of Panama.

Taboga, Panama is an island 4 miles long, 2 miles wide and 10 miles from Panama. The Aspinwall Hotel was formerly a French convalescent hospital and in 1905 was again opened as a hospital. In 1914 the hospital closed and turned into a hotel.

Initially about 100 prisoners were sent to Taboga and soon after about 60 were sent to the states. Prisoners were allowed to send first class mail free with the notation "Mailed by Interned Alien Enemy" hand stamped in red or black (see below).

Mailed by  
Interned Alien Enemy

Canal Zone military personnel censored all mail sent or received at Taboga. The censor mark (below) is hand-stamped in red or black and reads "Opened by U.S. Censor". The box is double lined 2 3/16 inches by 7/8 inch.



Envelopes and postal cards were cancelled at Balboa or Ancon and bear a hand-stamped return address reading "German Detention Camp, Taboga, R. de P." also in red or black (below). No postage was required. Early pieces of mail had the return address written by hand in ink.



On May 11 or May 12, 1918 the camp was closed and a small contingent of 60 prisoners was transferred to a facility in the United States. Then on May 20, 1918 the Hotel Aspinwall was reopened for use by the employees of the Panama Canal and their families. Rates at the hotel were \$2.25 per day, for a stay of seven days or more: \$1.75. Dinners were \$1.00, Lunches \$.75.

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